

SAYLOR COMPANY

PUBLIC RELATIONS COUNSEL

From: Steven Ellis, Saylor Company
Subject: Issues Points Memo – U.S. Congress Needs to Weigh All Sides Before Granting Request from Georgian Speaker
Date: September 27, 2010

Please consider these points as Congress comes to a close in the next few days:

- Georgia Parliamentary Speaker David Bakradze during his recent visit to Washington told some in the media that he asked U.S. House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) and United States Senator John McCain (R-AZ) to draft a congressional resolution, calling for the de-occupation by the Russian Federation of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.
- South Ossetia and Abkhazia do not regard their territories as occupied by the Russian federation. Both are independent countries, no longer part of Georgia and recognized by four United Nations members. Georgia has attacked both Abkhazia and South Ossetia multiple times in the last 20 years.
- There are indeed Russian troops on both territories—invited by the governments of both—to protect Abkhazian and South Ossetian citizens from further Georgian military action similar to the attack it waged against civilians in South Ossetia in August of 2008.
- Abkhazia and South Ossetia see the situation comparable to U.S. troops protecting the Republic of South Korea from attacks from the Democratic Republic of Korea, which is never officially referred to as an occupation.
- Pertinent quotes:
 - “If the United States Congress wants to know the truth about the situation in South Ossetia, it should listen to representatives of South Ossetia. Instead, Congress relies on what the Saakashvili regime provides, which is downright untrue. We have frequently invited representatives from the United States—including within the framework of the Geneva talks—to visit South Ossetia and see our country for themselves. We are waiting for their reply.

The fact is that President Saakashvili is the direct cause of the current situation in South Ossetia. The EU acknowledged that he started the war in 2008, yet he refuses to take responsibility for this violation of international law. It is that illegal attack that created the need for my country to be protected by Russian troops. Americans do not deserve to be further deceived by Georgian lies. The U.S. Congress can assure them that they will not by refusing to pass a resolution based only on lies of the government of President Saakashvili. I would like to ask Senator McCain and Speaker Pelosi, were it not for Russia, what would have happened to the people of South Ossetia in August 2008?

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We are open to all in South Ossetia. We are a noble people, and we believe that Americans sooner or later will see the truth about Georgia's aggression against South Ossetia and condemn the Saakashvili Government's irresponsible actions. We believe that before Congress approves or makes a further policy that will affect South Ossetia, it would do well to hear what the citizens of South Ossetia want to say about our situation. Acting otherwise would violate American values of fairness." – *Boris Chochiev, Plenipotentiary representative of the President of the Republic of South Ossetia for Post Conflict Settlement*

- o "Abkhazia respectfully cautions the United States Congress not to pass an official resolution based only on one-sided and extremely biased information from Speaker Bakradze. Our country is certainly not occupied by the Russian Federation, and any document that suggests that would utterly misrepresent the real situation on the ground. We invite anyone to come to Abkhazia to see for themselves that our civilian government conducts the business of our citizens independently from any foreign power. While we welcome the protection of our Russian partners, their presence here does not in any way constitute an occupation. Our continued independence, including our nation-building and economic development programmes, can only continue if our people feel safe and secure. Russian protection affords us exactly the necessary security we need to succeed.

The Georgian Government is deliberately attempting to manipulate the United States Congress, which is not good for Americans, Abkhazians, Russians or Georgians. We hope the distinguished gentlemen and ladies of the House and Senate recognize this and refuse to be deceived beyond what the Saakashvili government has already done to hide its own misdirection and failed domestic and international policies.

The United States has given Georgia more than \$1 billion in military and foreign aid. In return, the Government of Mikheil Saakashvili has pitted the U.S. against the Russian Federation on several occasions, including with its unwarranted brutal attack on South Ossetia in 2008 and on Abkhazia in 1992, 1998 and 2004. Before the U.S. Congress does any more favors for the Saakashvili government, it may be prudent for it to conduct an investigation into how Tbilisi has spent the \$US1 billion gift from American taxpayers and how President Saakashvili has almost singlehandedly put at risk improved American-Russian relations. Abkhaz citizens strongly feel we have the right to be heard on international policies that bear on our future and believe that such a request is reasonable under the standards of freedom and democracy. We ask the distinguished House and Senate to allow Abkhaz representatives to further present our point of view on the Georgian-Abkhaz dispute, as it is only by listening to both sides of the conflict that a wise and balanced decision can be made at any level." – *Viacheslav Chirikba, Foreign Policy Advisor to the President of Abkhazia and head of the Abkhaz Delegation to the Geneva Discussions.*

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